

“March by the Professionals” – Official Declaration

As professionals we are concerned about the development of Hong Kong; in particular, we are extremely worried about the proposals contained in the Government’s consultation paper on the replacement mechanism. The consultation paper mis-interprets most people’s view by wrongly describing a basic civil rights as a loophole which needs to be plugged. If any of the options in the consultation paper was implemented, it will plainly deprive of our rights to vote and to be elected when a vacancy exists in the legislature – blocking people’s opportunities to express their free will and to exercise their political choice. Under an imperfect election system, such as the one we have today in Hong Kong, the by-election rights is the essential civil rights and it reflects the core values highly treasured by us.

Our professional integrity always enables us to discern the right from wrong and to speak truth unto power. Our concern is exacerbated by the series of concerted events initiated by the Government to curtail our civil rights and our freedom of expression - this ranges from government officials’ negative comments on people’s rights to invoke judicial review, proposal to criminalise the use of copyrighted materials on the internet, proposed laws to influence charitable organisations, excessive use of police authority, intervention on news reporting and the appointment of an administrative officer to head RTHK. These acts will only dampen Hong Kong’s competitiveness and development in the long run.

This silent march is our response to the erosion of the core values of Hong Kong. We urge the Government to return to the right track and withdraw all proposals of replacement mechanism so that our by-election rights and all other civil rights will continue to remain intact.

18 September 2011

【專業界遊行】 大會宣言

身為專業人士，我們對於香港的發展感到憂慮，對於特區政府推出立法會替補機制的建議，感到心寒。我們看到政府諮詢文件曲解民意，顛倒黑白，將一項香港人固有的公民權利解讀為一項需要堵塞的漏洞。政府諮詢的目的，旨在扼殺市民在立法會議席出缺時的投票權和參選權，使香港人失去透過補選機制，實踐自由意志和表達政治主張的機會。在今天民主制度不健全的香港，補選權不但是不可或缺的公民權利，更反映了香港人珍惜的核心價值。

專業人士的操守，必須是其是、非其非，敢於在權力面前講真話。我們對於特區政府混淆是非、顛倒黑白的做法，特別感到痛心。我們擔心今次政府推出替補機制，是一連串削弱公民權利、緊縮自由空間和打擊法治精神的部署。從特區官員輕蔑市民行使司法覆核權的言論，拮制網絡自由和干預慈善團體的立法建議，到最近濫用警權、妨礙新聞採訪、空降政務官接管港台等種種手法，更加深了我們的憂慮。這種趨勢只會削弱香港的城市競爭力，對長遠發展有百害而無一利。

我們今天手持黑玫瑰遊行，進行無聲抗議，正好反映了香港核心價值被污染侵蝕的危機。我們呼籲特區政府懸崖勒馬，撤回替補方案，確保香港人繼續享有立法會補選權和一切固有的公民權利。

二零一一年九月十八日